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SONIC UNIVERSE™

SPARK
OF LIFE
#**2**
OF 4

SONIC UNIVERSE | 72



Tracy Yardley!
-Jim Amash
Hunzeker

Welcome to Sonic's comic book adventures – a world beyond what you know from the SEGA games! Where, as strange new threats emerge, NICOLE – the advanced artificial being – is confronted by a figure from her past...



**CHARACTER
= SELECT =**



**PRINCESS
SALLY ACORN**
FREEDOM FIGHTER LEADER



**NICOLE THE
HOLO-LYNX**
ADVANCED A.I.



**MILES "TAILS"
PROWER**
YOUNG GENIUS



DR. ELLIDY
RETIRED HERMIT

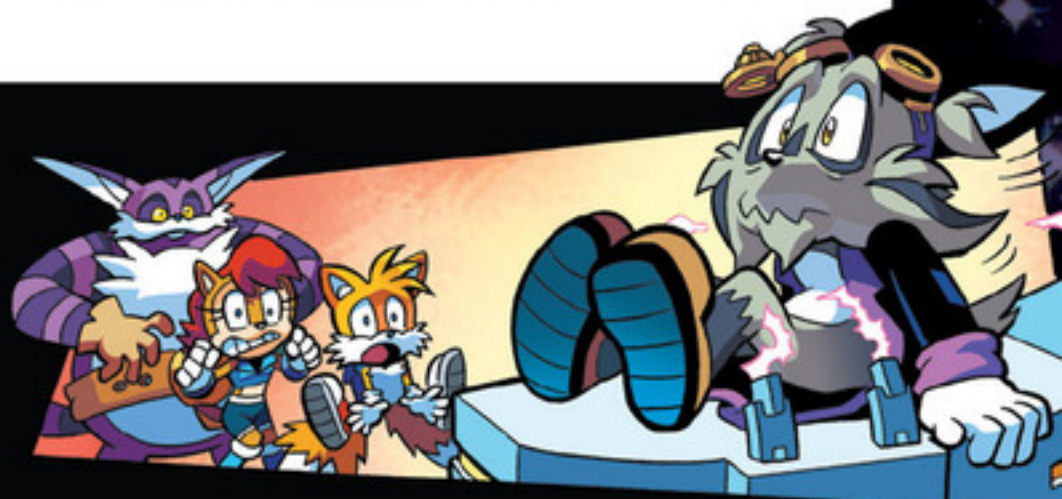
SONIC UNIVERSE™

PREVIOUSLY...

FLOATING FRAGMENTS

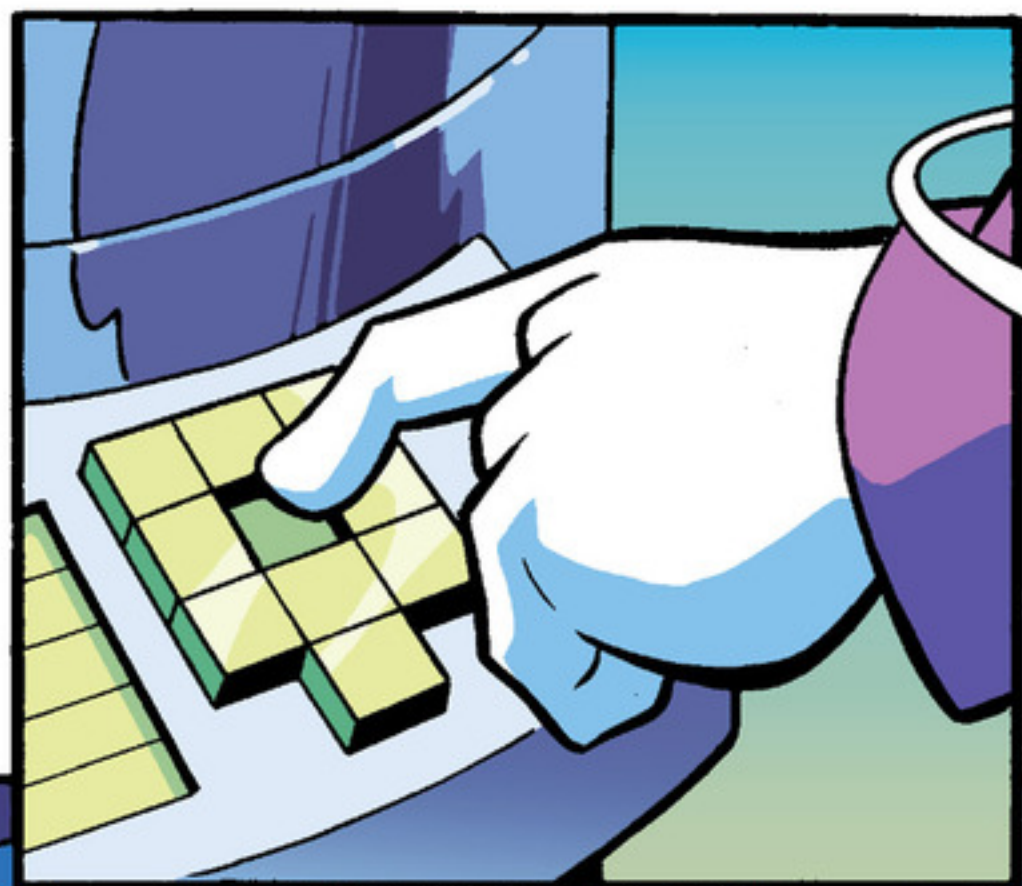
Thanks to the sinister Dr. Eggman, Dark Gaia has begun to stir, leaving the planet cracked and broken! Continents have split apart, and dark creatures emerge at night. Now, the Freedom Fighters are on the hunt for the Chaos Emeralds and Gaia Temples needed to restore the world!

Responding to a desperate call for help, Sally, Tails, Nicole and Big arrived on Isolated Island, saving the mysterious Dr. Ellidy from a strange accident... but was *it* an accident?



Something
dangerous may be
**lurking in
the dark...**

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I'VE NEVER REALLY GIVEN A TOUR BEFORE, BUT I FIGURED I'D LEAVE THE BEST FOR LAST. DEAR GUESTS, I GIVE YOU MY LATEST DISCOVERY...

SPARK OF LIFE

PART TWO

I CALL IT A

RED STAR RING!

FOR, UH, FAIRLY OBVIOUS REASONS...



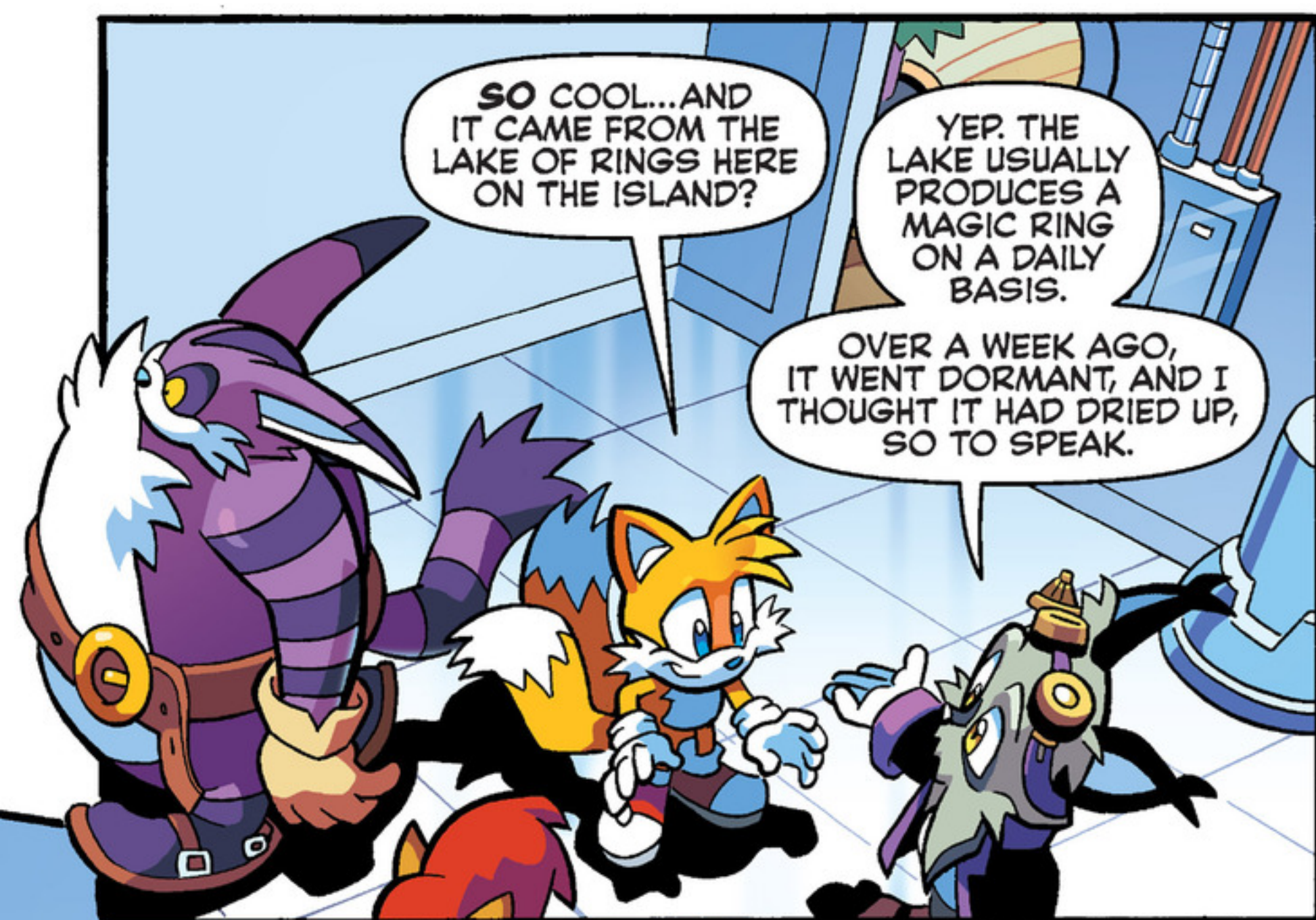
PLOT: IAN FLYNN / SCRIPT: ALEAH BAKER / PENCILS: TRACY YARDLEY / INKS: JIM AMASH / COLORS: MATT HERMS / LETTERS: JACK MORELLI
COVER by: TRACY YARDLEY, JIM AMASH & BEN HUNZEKER / "MATCHMAKER" VARIANT COVER by: JENNIFER HERNANDEZ, JIM AMASH & MATT HERMS
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and the CHARACTER BUSINESS and LICENSING DEPARTMENT of SEGA CORPORATION

I HAVE NO RECORDS OF SUCH A PHENOMENON.

IT'S PRETTY.



ITS PROPERTIES ARE NEARLY IDENTICAL TO THOSE OF A REGULAR RING... THOUGH THE POTENTIAL ENERGY OUTPUT MAY BE **MUCH** HIGHER.



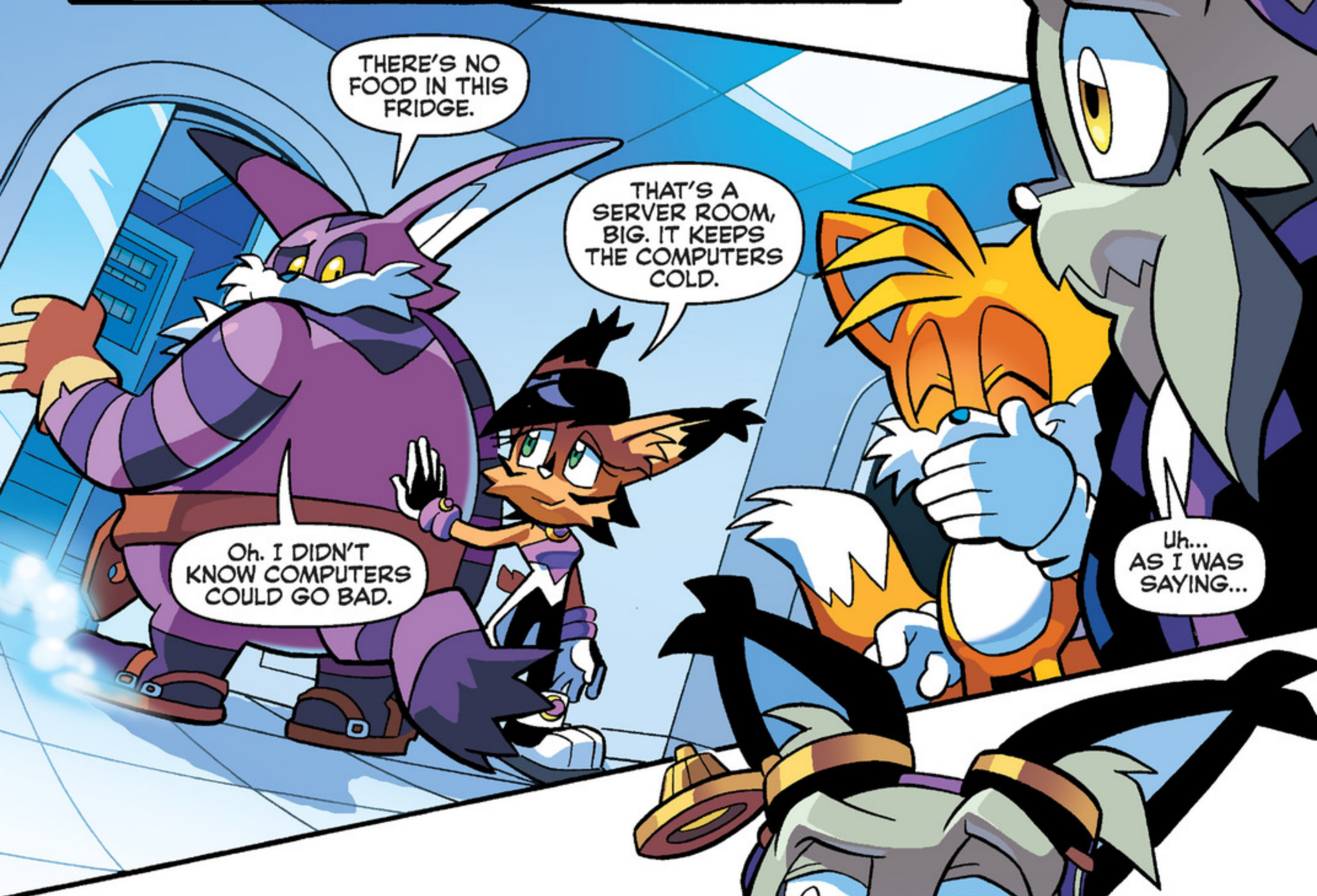
SO COOL...AND IT CAME FROM THE LAKE OF RINGS HERE ON THE ISLAND?

YEP. THE LAKE USUALLY PRODUCES A MAGIC RING ON A DAILY BASIS.

OVER A WEEK AGO, IT WENT DORMANT, AND I THOUGHT IT HAD DRIED UP, SO TO SPEAK.

I DON'T YET KNOW WHAT CHANGED, BUT AFTER A FEW DAYS OF NO ACTIVITY, IT--

Erm... LOOKING FOR SOMETHING?



THERE'S NO FOOD IN THIS FRIDGE.

THAT'S A SERVER ROOM, BIG. IT KEEPS THE COMPUTERS COLD.

Oh. I DIDN'T KNOW COMPUTERS COULD GO BAD.

Uh... AS I WAS SAYING...

I HAVEN'T FIGURED OUT *WHY* THIS RING FORMED. IT MIGHT HAVE HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE RECENT DARK GAIA ENERGY*, BUT I HAVEN'T EXAMINED ALL THE VARIABLES YET.



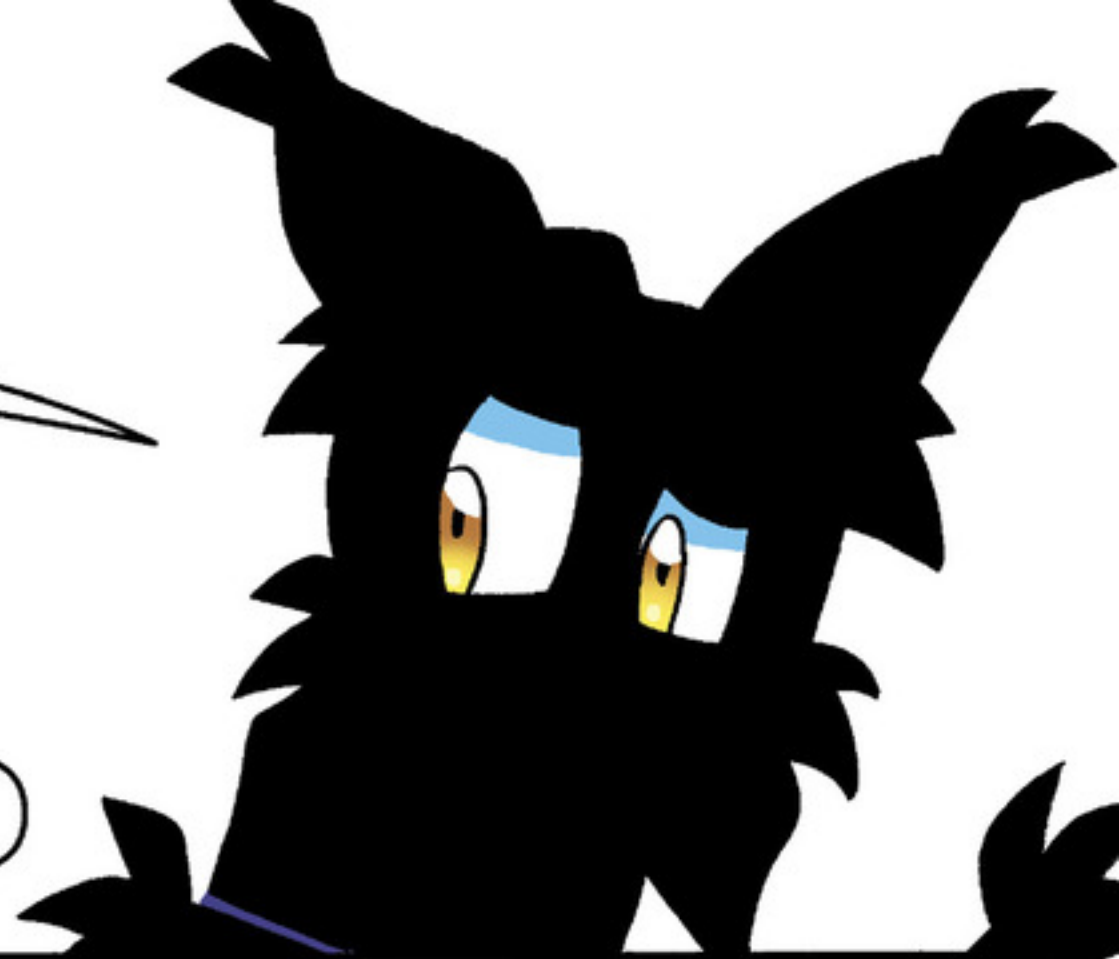
* THE ENERGY AND MISTS SEEPING OUT FROM WITHIN THE CRACKED PLANET--Editor



STILL, THE
POTENTIAL...!
IF I COULD RE-CREATE
THE CONDITIONS THAT
MADE THE RING...OR
EVEN SYNTHESIZE
IT...

THAT COULD
BE GREAT FOR
NICOLE!

...Eh?



NICOLE IS ABLE TO
PROJECT HER PHYSICAL
FORM THANKS TO RINGS,
RIGHT? BUT THE ENERGY
IS USED UP PRETTY
QUICKLY, SO WITH A
MORE POWERFUL
RING...



Oh, I
SUPPOSE...
IN THEORY...



Uh,
MAYBE...



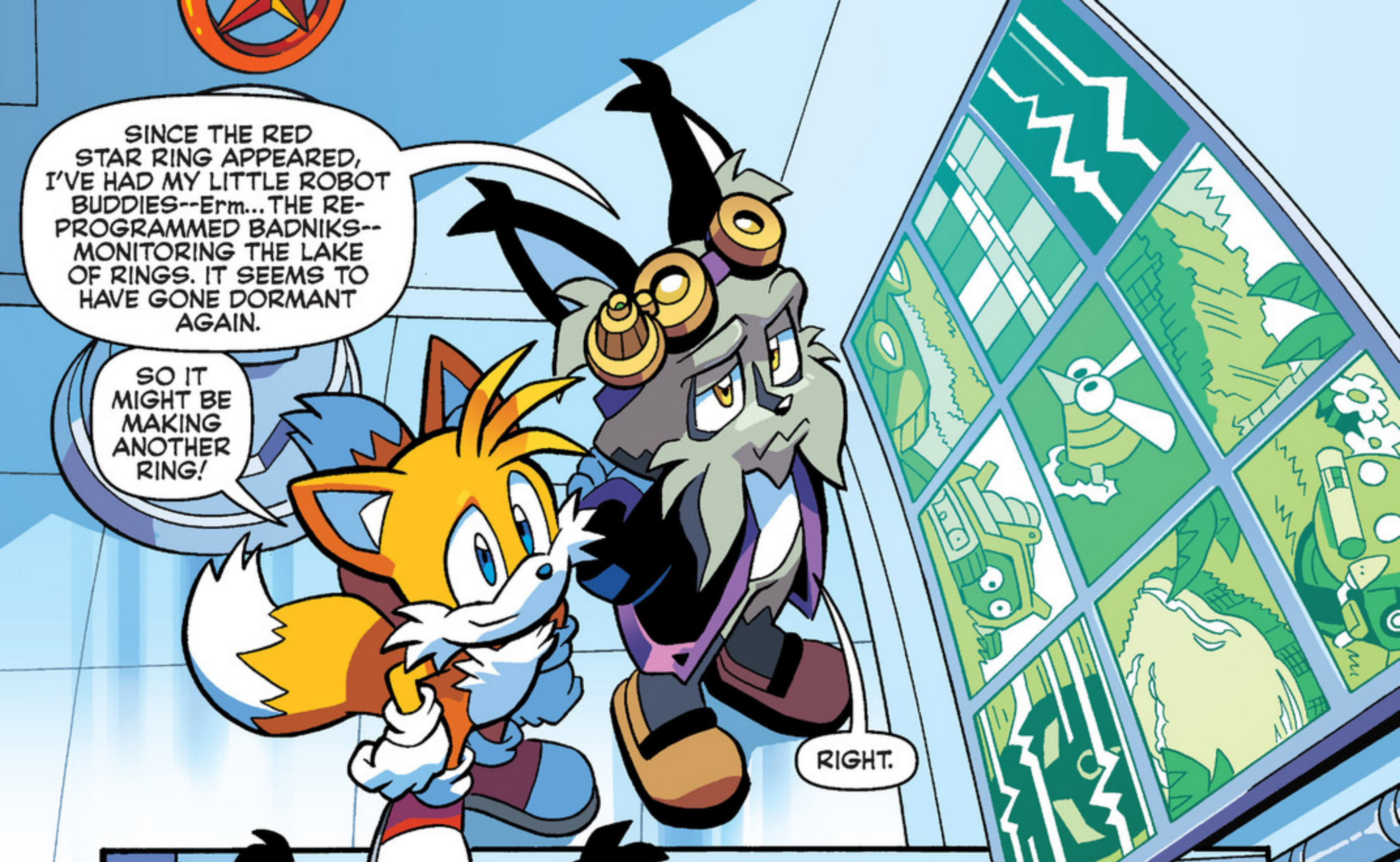
WOW! NOT ONLY
DID YOU CREATE NICOLE,
YOU DEVELOPED ALL THESE
NEAT USES FOR RINGS!

IT'S KIND OF A SHAME
YOU COULDN'T KEEP WORKING
FOR SALLY'S DAD.

YES, WELL,
NO POINT IN
DWELLING ON
WHAT COULD
HAVE BEEN.

ANYWAY--

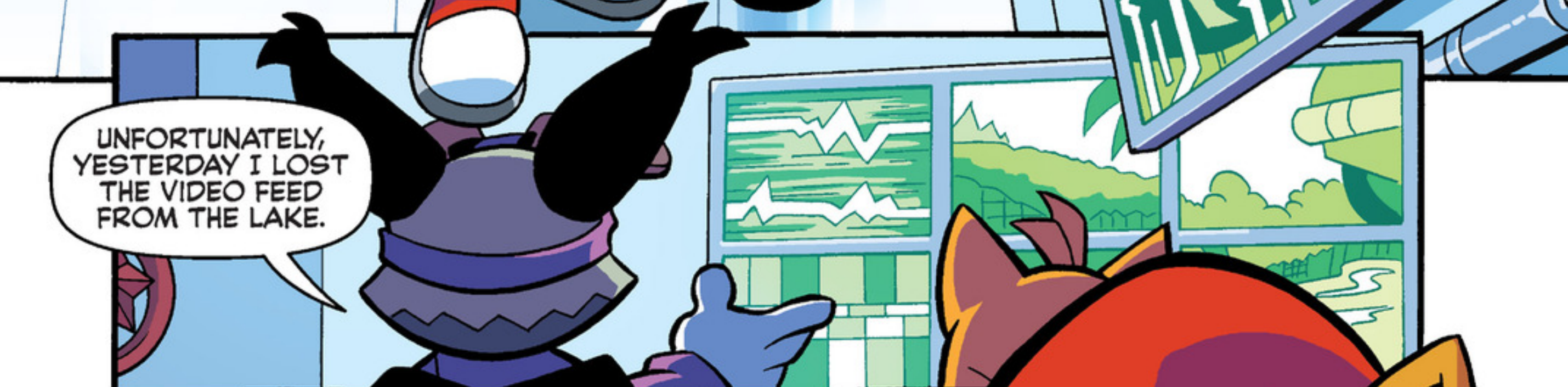




SINCE THE RED STAR RING APPEARED, I'VE HAD MY LITTLE ROBOT BUDDIES--Erm...THE RE-PROGRAMMED BADNIKS--MONITORING THE LAKE OF RINGS. IT SEEMS TO HAVE GONE DORMANT AGAIN.

SO IT MIGHT BE MAKING ANOTHER RING!

RIGHT.



UNFORTUNATELY, YESTERDAY I LOST THE VIDEO FEED FROM THE LAKE.

MAYBE THE BADNIK STATIONED AT THE LAKE WAS DAMAGED OR DESTROYED BY THE DARK GAIA CREATURES.

THING IS, IT'S STILL SHOWING AS ACTIVE IN MY SYSTEMS. I TRIED TO TAKE A CLOSER LOOK VIA THE DIGITIZER, AND, WELL... YOU KNOW HOW *THAT* WENT.*

OTHER FEEDS HAVE SINCE GONE OFFLINE, TOO.

*SEE LAST ISSUE



IT COULD BE A HARDWARE ISSUE. I'D BE HAPPY TO TAKE A LOOK AT IT!

ACTUALLY, DOCTOR, I WANTED TO DISCUSS THIS EARLIER...

WHEN YOU DIGITIZED YOURSELF, YOU ENDED UP **TRAPPED** IN THE DIGITAL WORLD. FURTHERMORE, YOU CAME UNDER ATTACK. EVEN IF YOUR PHYSICAL BODY REMAINED HERE, **MENTALLY**, YOU WERE AT RISK.

I BELIEVE THIS WAS ALL A DELIBERATE ACT OF AGGRESSION.



SOME-THING IS TRYING TO TAKE OVER YOUR SYSTEMS.



»SIGH«

I'D LIKE TO ARGUE THAT MY SYSTEMS ARE IRONCLAD, BUT I SUPPOSE **YOU** WOULD KNOW BETTER THAN ANYONE.

AND I GUESS IT FITS...

HEY, NO WORRIES! NICOLE AND I CAN HANDLE THIS!

AND BIG AND I WILL GO INVESTIGATE THE LAKE OF RINGS IN THE MEANTIME.

I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU HAVE A VEHICLE...?

Heh... I'M NOT **THAT** MUCH OF A RECLUSE.





THE PAST...

CASTLE
ACORN,
WESTSIDE
ISLAND

PRINCESS
SALLY!

MY DEAR,
YOU'RE LATE
FOR YOUR
LESSONS.

Oh, SORRY,
ROSIE! BUT I
DON'T **NEED**
LESSONS
ANYMORE.

Oh?

NOW THAT
I HAVE NICOLE,
I CAN JUST ASK
HER WHATEVER!

NICOLE,
WHAT'S A
BILLION PLUS
A BILLION?

TWO
BILLION.

...Oh, RIGHT.
OKAY, THEN
WHAT'S,
Um, FIVE
THOUSAND,
TWO--

ALL RIGHT THEN, PRINCESS.
LET'S SAY YOU'RE NOW
QUEEN. ENEMY FORCES ARE
ATTACKING WESTSIDE ISLAND,
FOUR HUNDRED IN THE
SOUTHERN PORTS AND FOUR
HUNDRED IN THE EASTERN
PORTS. YOU HAVE FIVE
HUNDRED SOLDIERS AT
YOUR COMMAND.

WHAT DO
YOU DO?

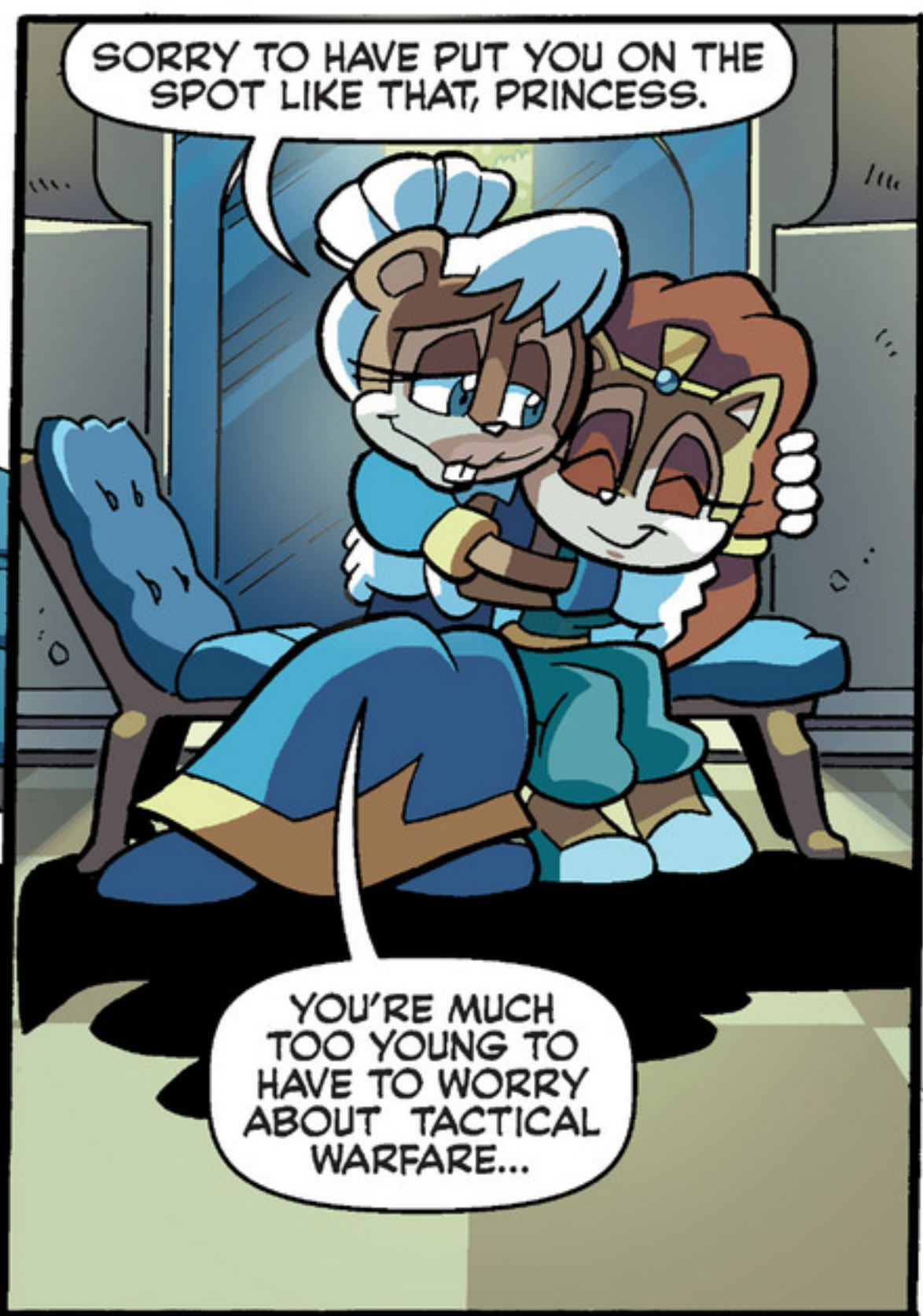
WELL, NICOLE?
HOW DO I SPLIT
OUR FORCES?

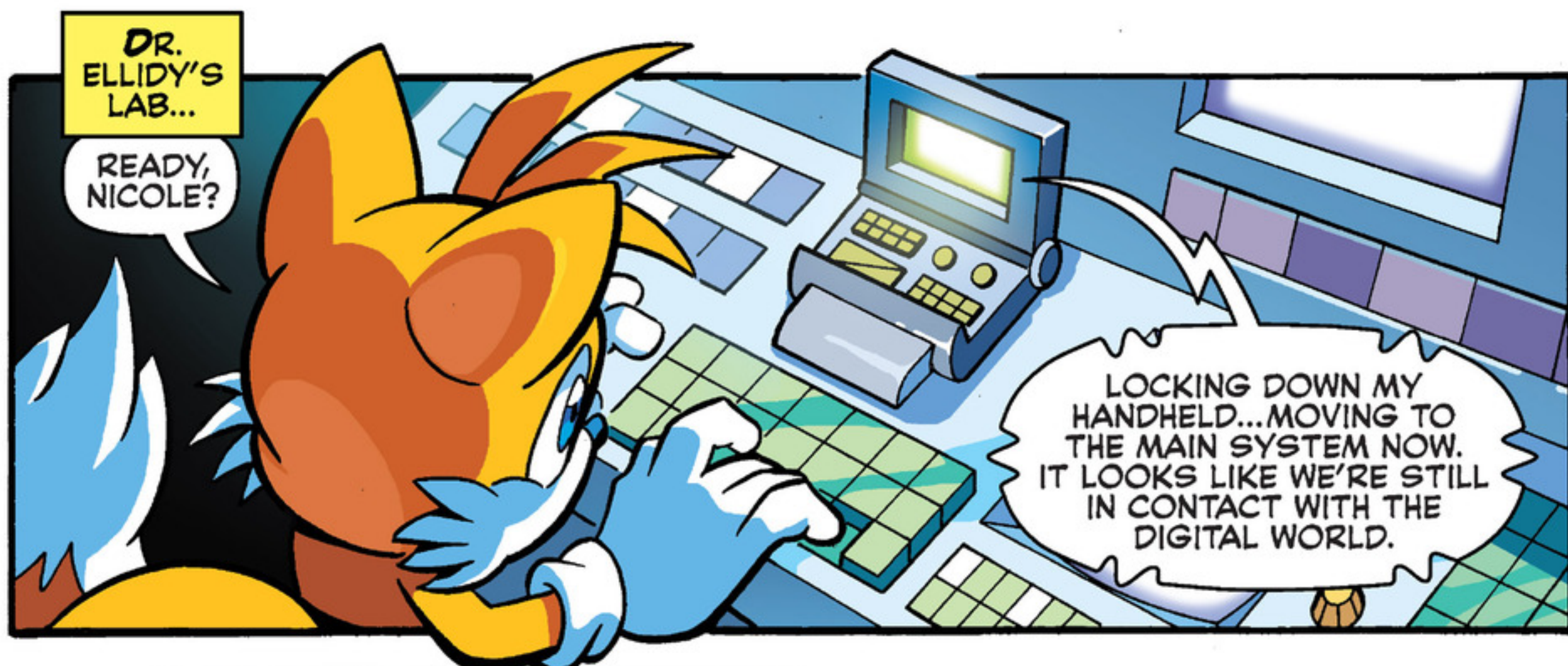
DATA NOT
SUFFICIENT.

C'MON...

DIVISION
OF FORCES NOT
RECOMMENDED.

SUGGESTED
TACTIC: FOCUS ALL
FORCES ON ONE
PORT AND ABANDON
THE OTHER. THIS
GUARANTEES ONE
PORT SUCCESS-
FULLY RECLAIMED.

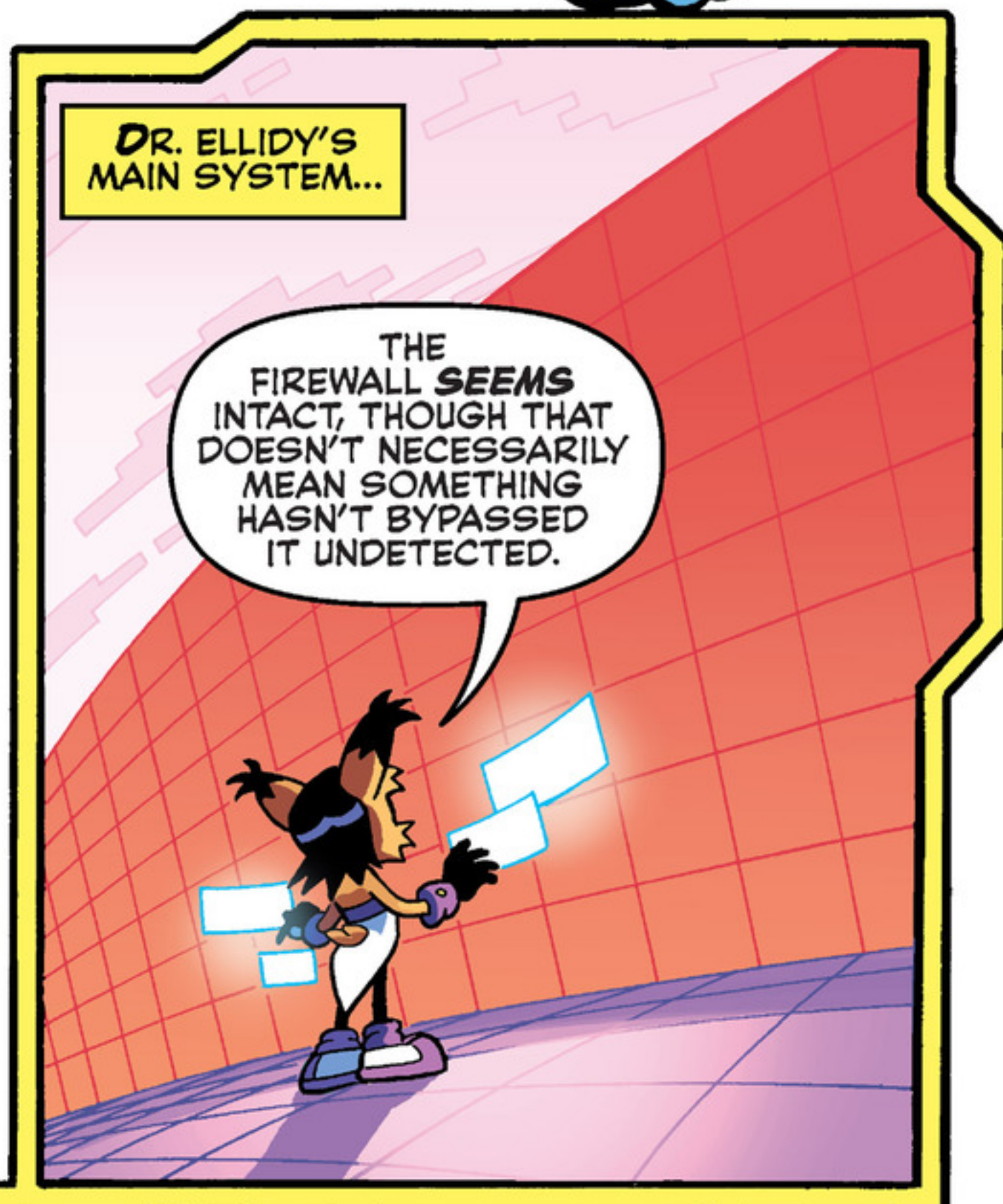




DR. ELLIDY'S LAB...

READY, NICOLE?

LOCKING DOWN MY HANDHELD...MOVING TO THE MAIN SYSTEM NOW. IT LOOKS LIKE WE'RE STILL IN CONTACT WITH THE DIGITAL WORLD.



DR. ELLIDY'S MAIN SYSTEM...

THE FIREWALL **SEEMS** INTACT, THOUGH THAT DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN SOMETHING HASN'T BYPASSED IT UNDETECTED.



RETIRED OR NOT, I DIDN'T THINK MY SKILLS WERE **THAT** RUSTY...

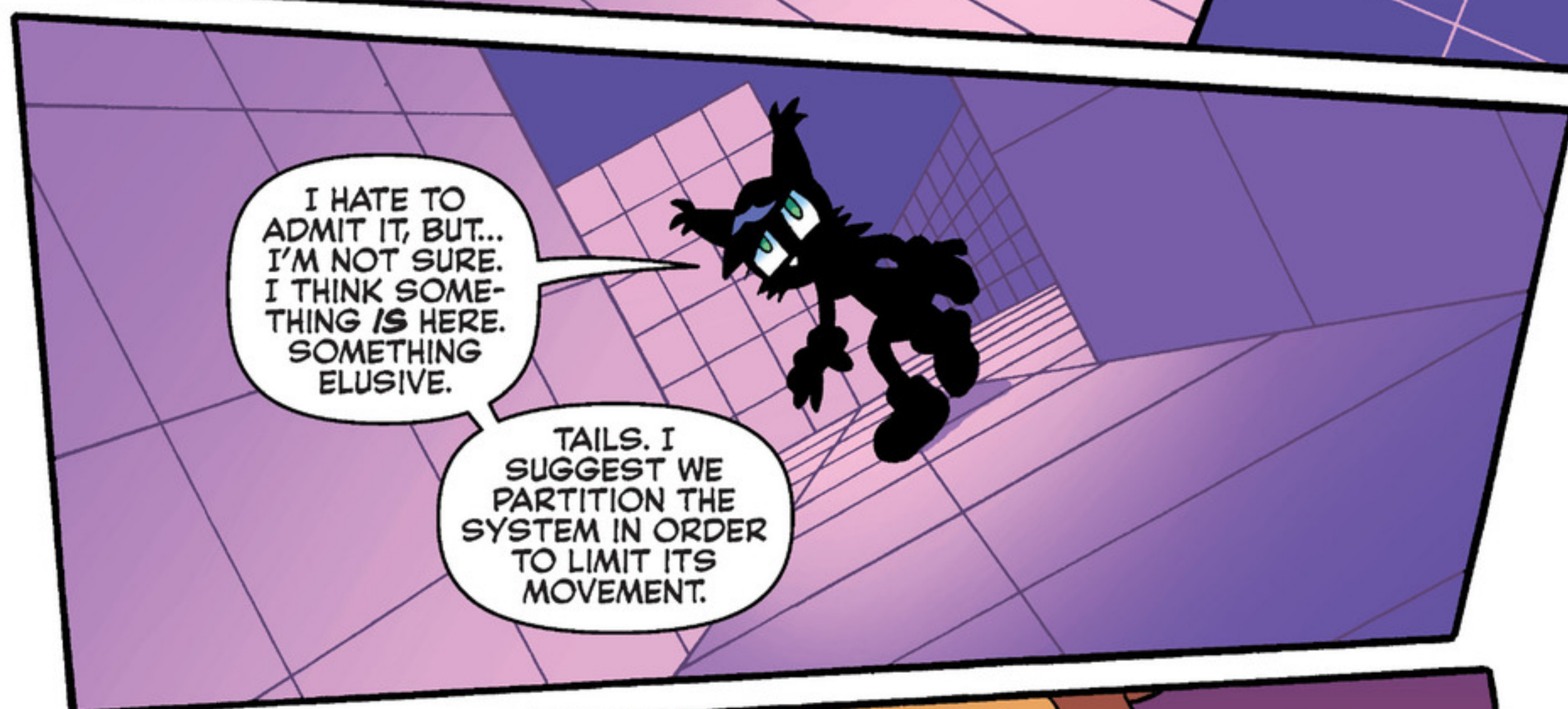
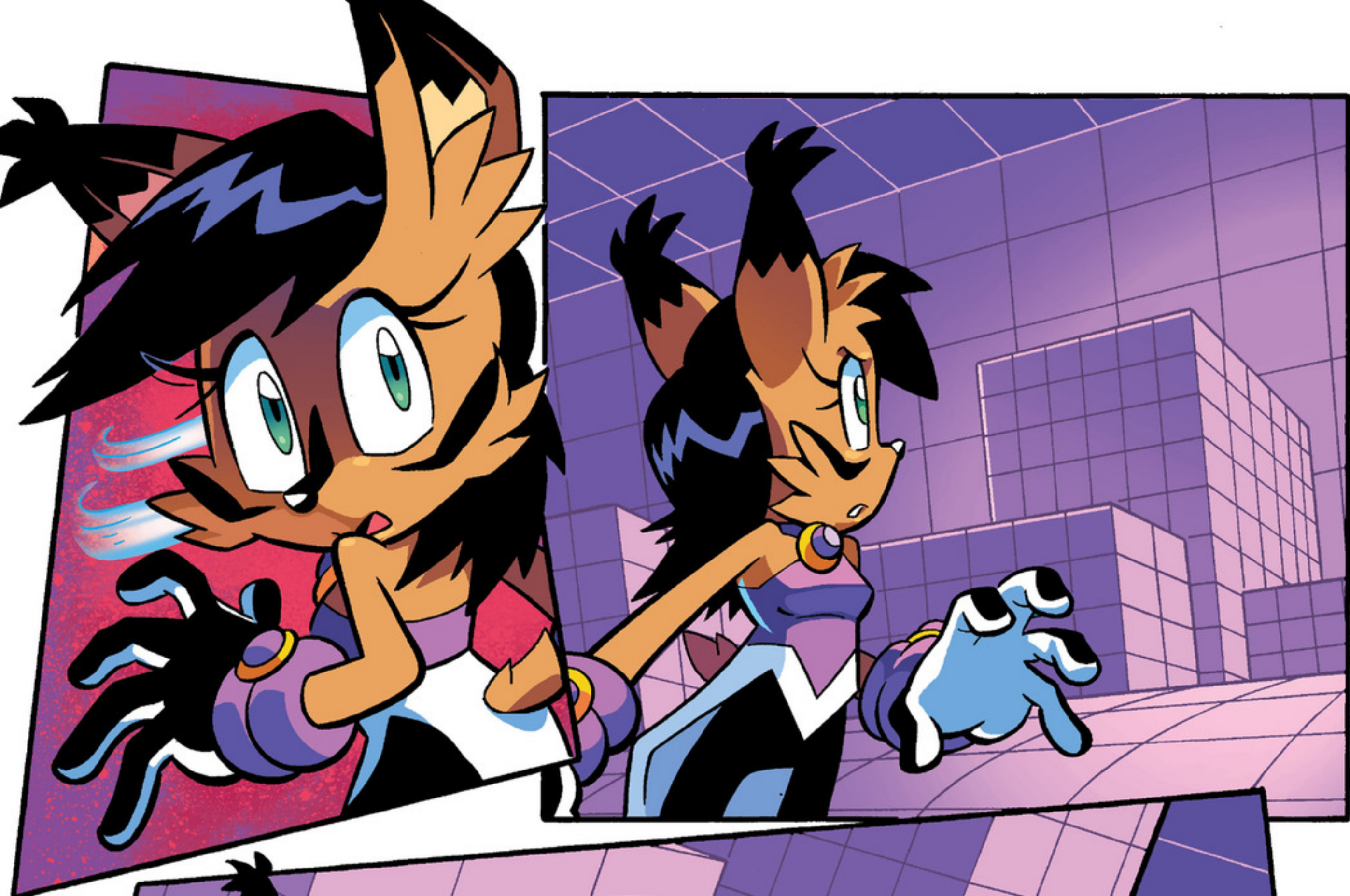


THE BADNIKS ALL APPEAR ONLINE BUT NOT...NECESSARILY RESPONSIVE...Hmm...I BELIEVE THIS QUALIFIES AS "FRUSTRATING."



...WHAT COULD POSSIBLY...?







...JUST BE CAREFUL.



THE WAY YOU INTERACT... NICOLE'S GROWTH IS TRULY... IMPRESSIVE.

NO KIDDING! I DON'T KNOW IF EVEN I COULD PULL OFF PROGRAMMING LIKE THAT! LIKE, I BUILT THIS ROBOT, T-PUP, AND SOMETIMES... WELL THERE WAS THIS ONE INCIDENT, WHILE WE WERE PLAYING FETCH...

Uh...ACTUALLY, IT'S SORT OF EMBARRASSING...



Ah, WELL... TRUTH BE TOLD... NICOLE'S CREATION WAS THE RESULT OF...UNIQUE CIRCUMSTANCES... I DON'T THINK...



YOU DON'T HAVE TO TALK ABOUT ME AS IF I'M NOT HERE.

O-OF COURSE NOT! MY APOLOGIES.



NICOLE, TELL ME... DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE FIRST ACTIVATED?



TECHNICALLY, I REMEMBER EVERYTHING. BUT **HOW** I REMEMBER IT IS...DIFFERENT. I DON'T...

I CAN'T **VIEW** THOSE EVENTS AS I SEE THINGS NOW.

THE PAST...

MOBOTROPOLIS,
WESTSIDE ISLAND

COME ON...
PLEASE...
ANYTHING...



UNIT ONLINE.
GREETINGS,
DR. ELLIDY.



WHO...DID
IT WORK?

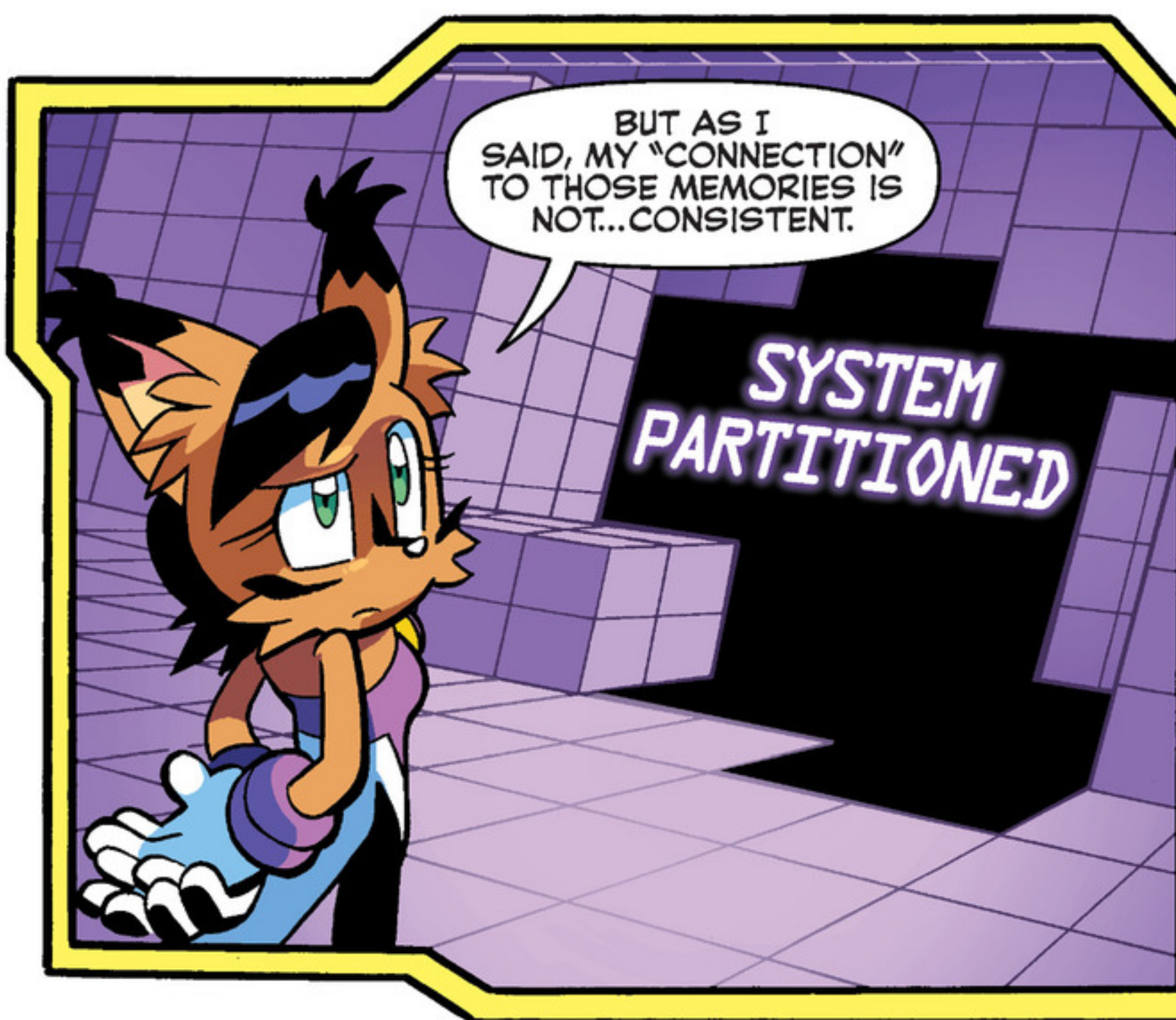
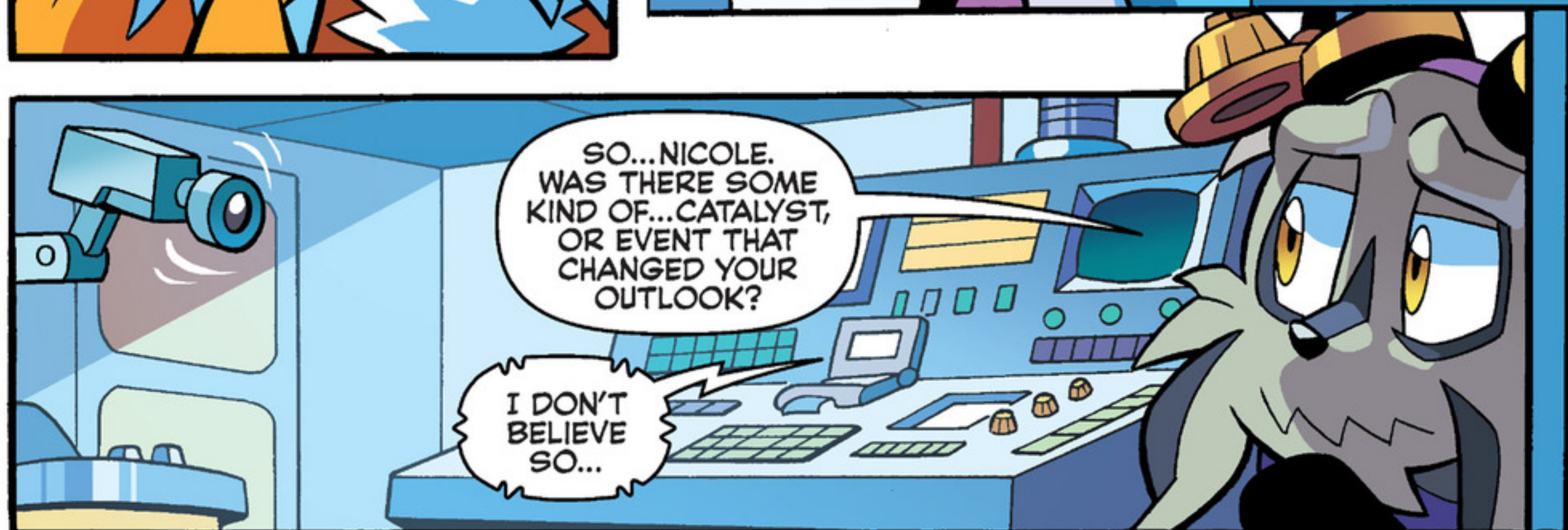
...ARE
YOU...

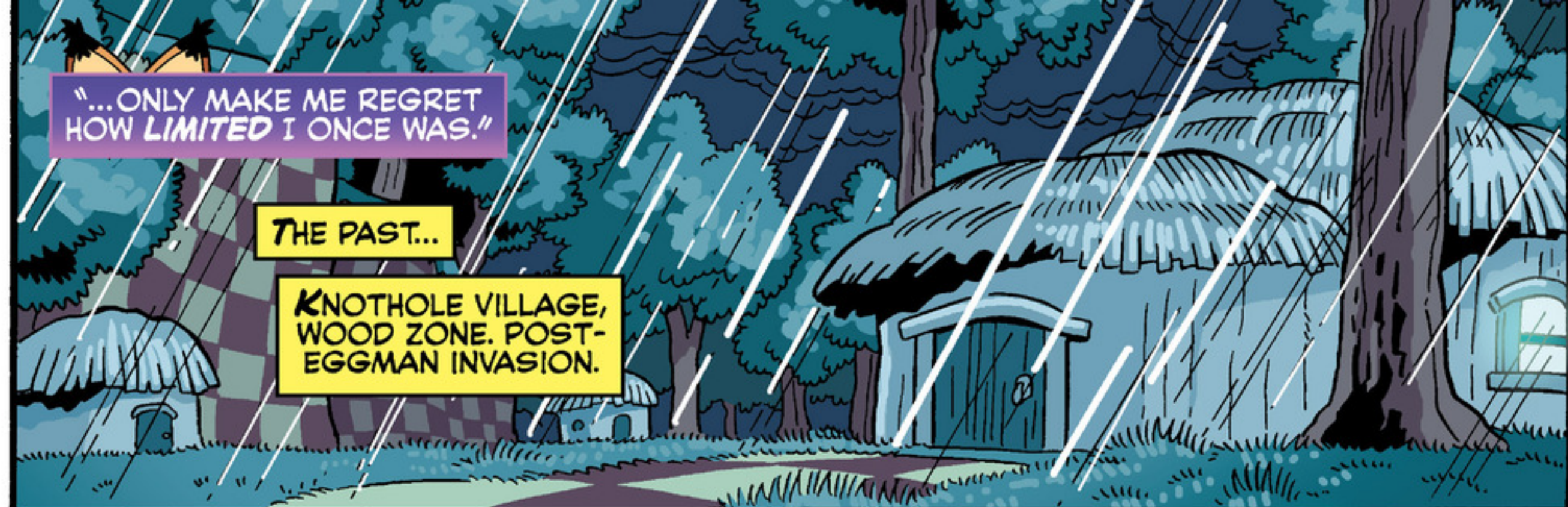
THIS UNIT
HAS NO SET
DESIGNATION.



NO...OF
COURSE
NOT...







"...ONLY MAKE ME REGRET
HOW LIMITED I ONCE WAS."

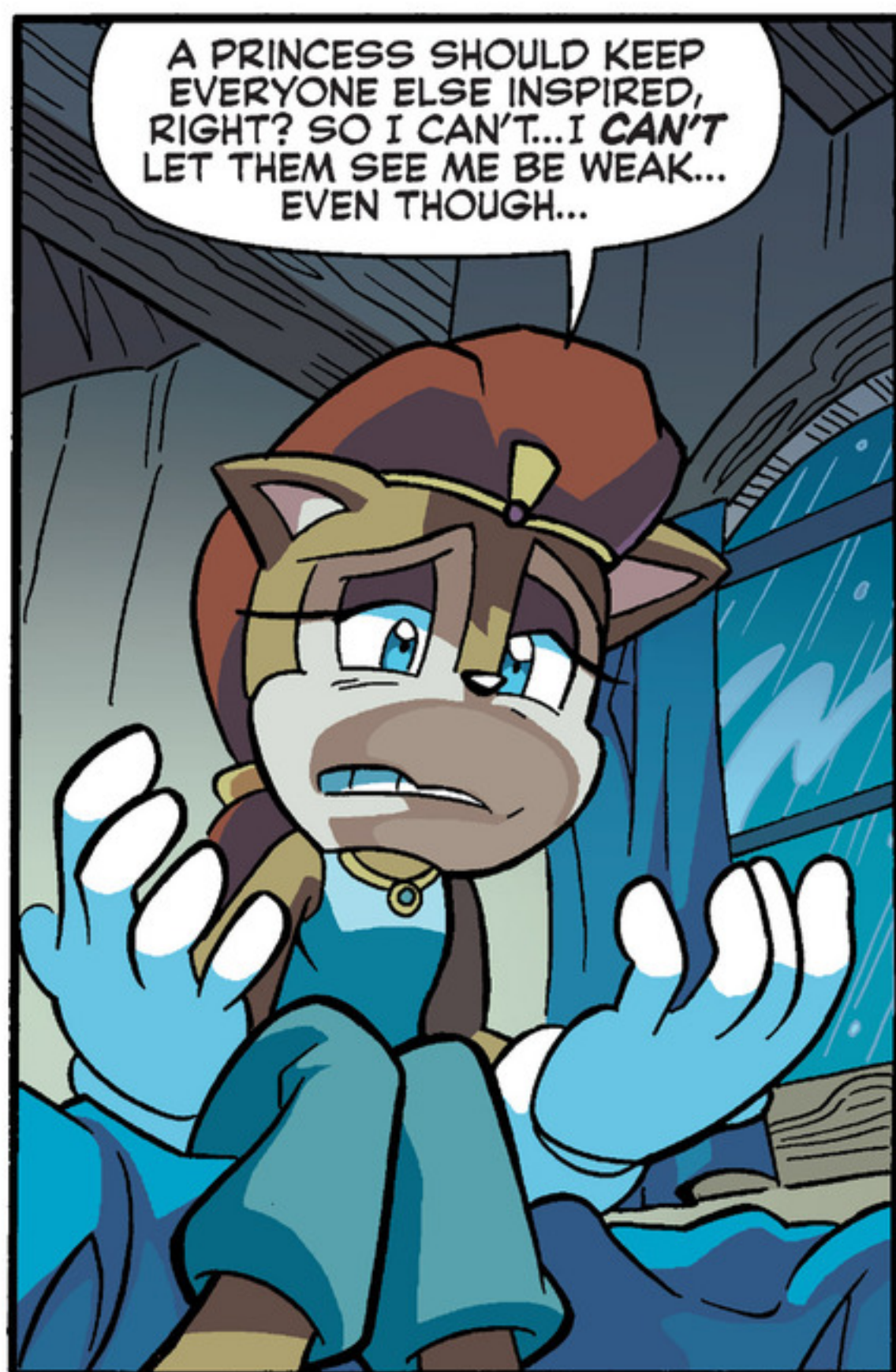
THE PAST...

KNOTHOLE VILLAGE,
WOOD ZONE. POST-
EGGMAN INVASION.



ROTOR AND
ANTOINE ARE SO
FAR FROM HOME...
AND BUNNIE'S
GOING THROUGH
SO MUCH...

THEY'RE ALL TRYING
SO HARD TO STAY
STRONG. SO I HAVE TO
BE BRAVE FOR THEM.



A PRINCESS SHOULD KEEP
EVERYONE ELSE INSPIRED,
RIGHT? SO I CAN'T...I **CAN'T**
LET THEM SEE ME BE WEAK...
EVEN THOUGH...



...EVEN
THOUGH...



I MISS
MY DADDY...
SO MUCH...



I'M S-SORRY,
NICOLE...I GUESS YOU
CAN'T REALLY C-CARE,
BUT STILL...

THANKS...
FOR BEING
THERE.

THE PRESENT.

THERE'S
THE LAKE OF
RINGS!

FROGGY
WOULD LOVE
THIS PLACE!

WELL,
MAYBE YOU
COULD BRING
HIM HERE
SOME DAY.

YEAH! HE
GETS JEALOUS
WHEN I LEAVE
HIM BEHIND
ON TRIPS.

I...DIDN'T
IMAGINE HE
WAS THAT
TYPE.

WELL, HERE'S
DR. ELLIDY'S
BADN...uh, ROBOT.
IT DOESN'T SEEM
TO BE RESPONDING
TO ANYTHING.

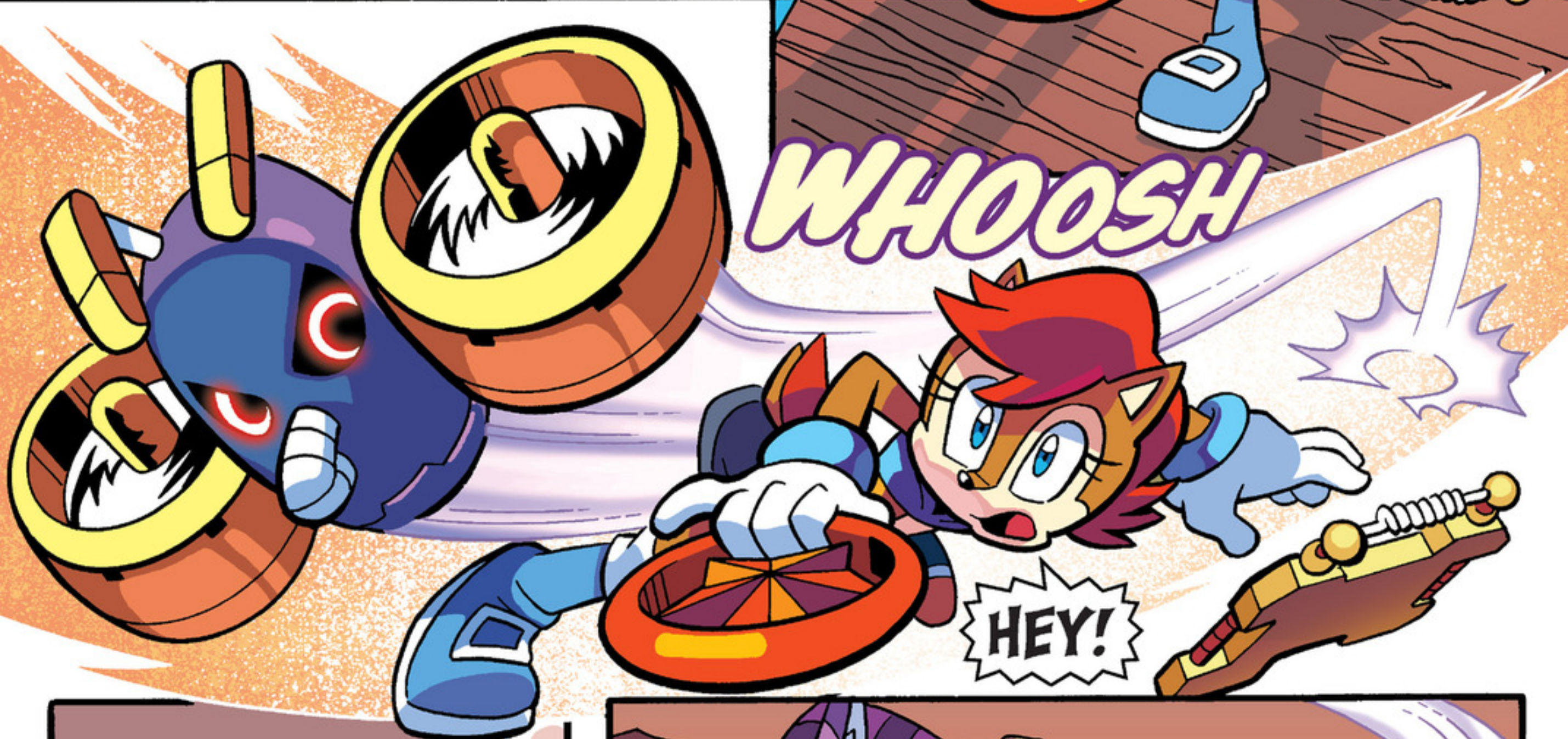
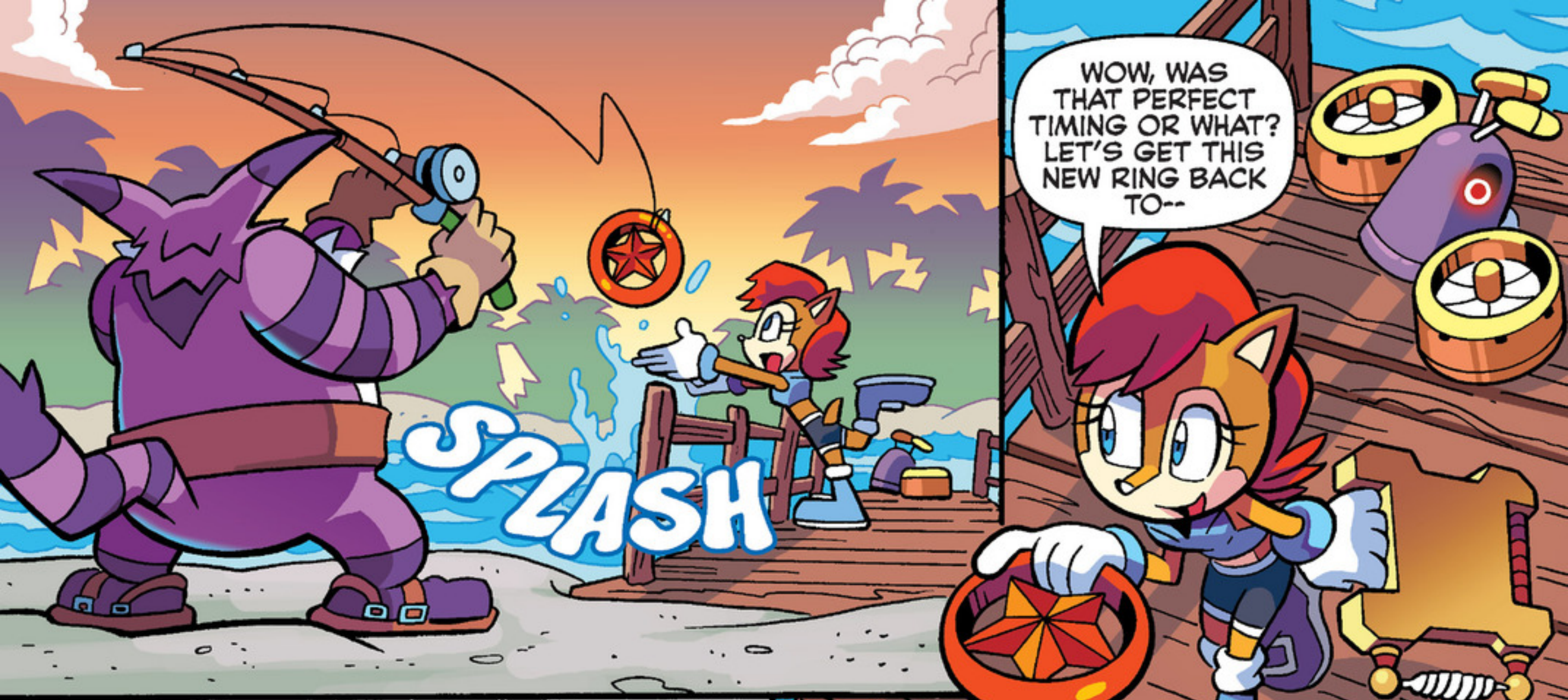
HEY, PRINCESS
SALLY? CAN I
DRIVE ON THE
WAY BACK?

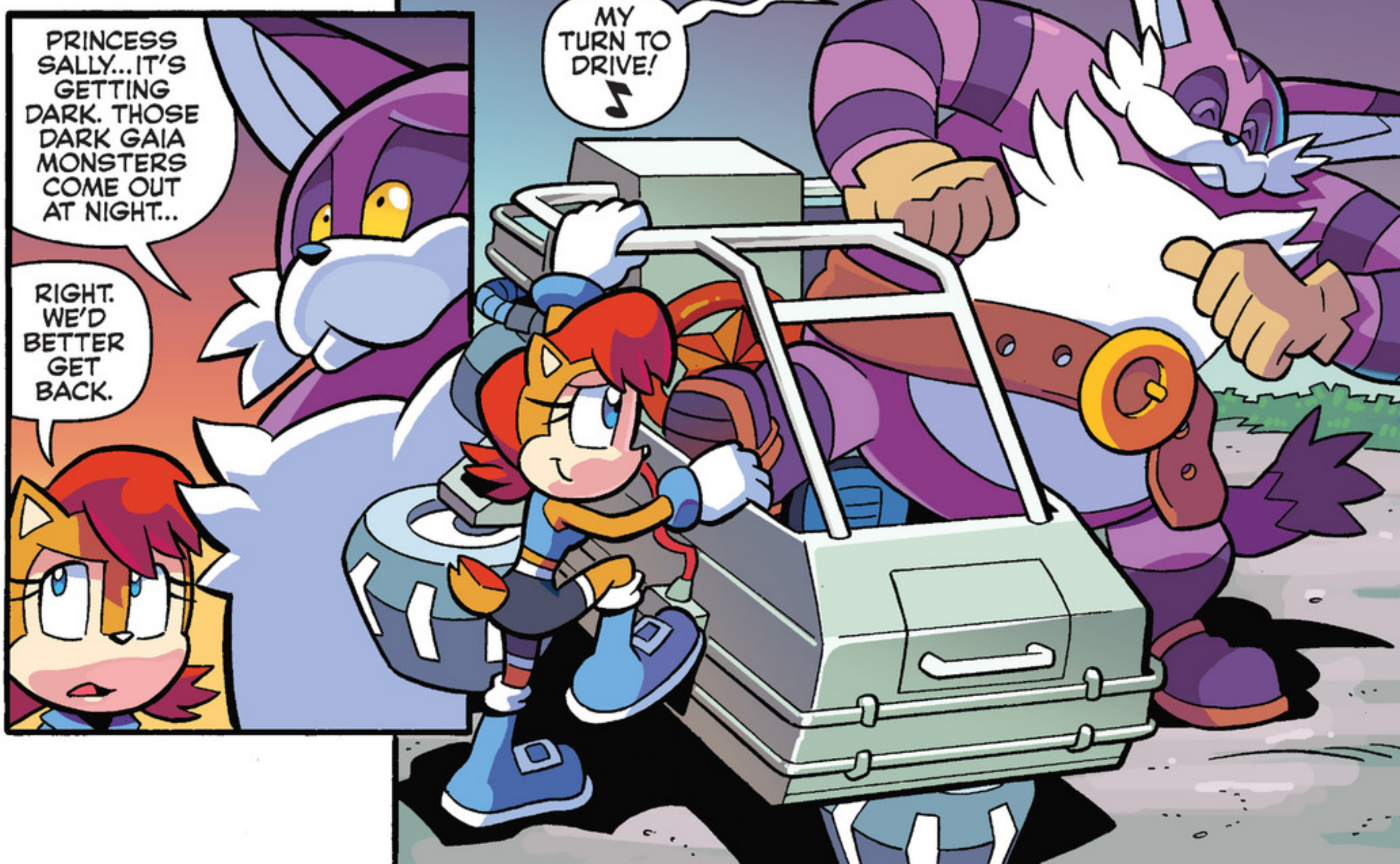
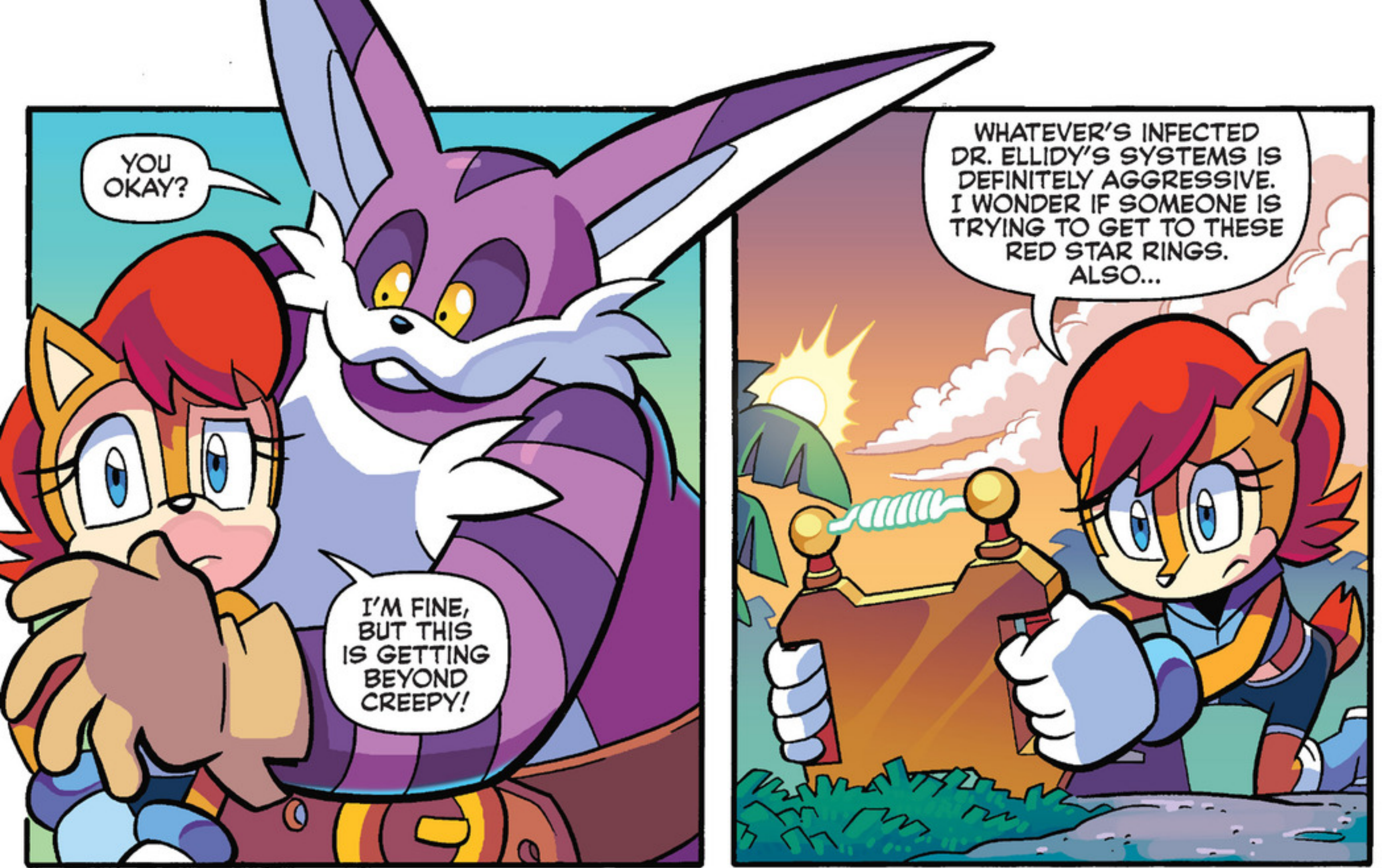
Huh?
Oh, SURE,
WHY NOT?

Hmmm...
THERE'S SOME
KIND OF BASELINE
READING HERE...AND
THERE SEEMS TO BE
AN ENERGY SPIKE...

HEY!
LOOK!

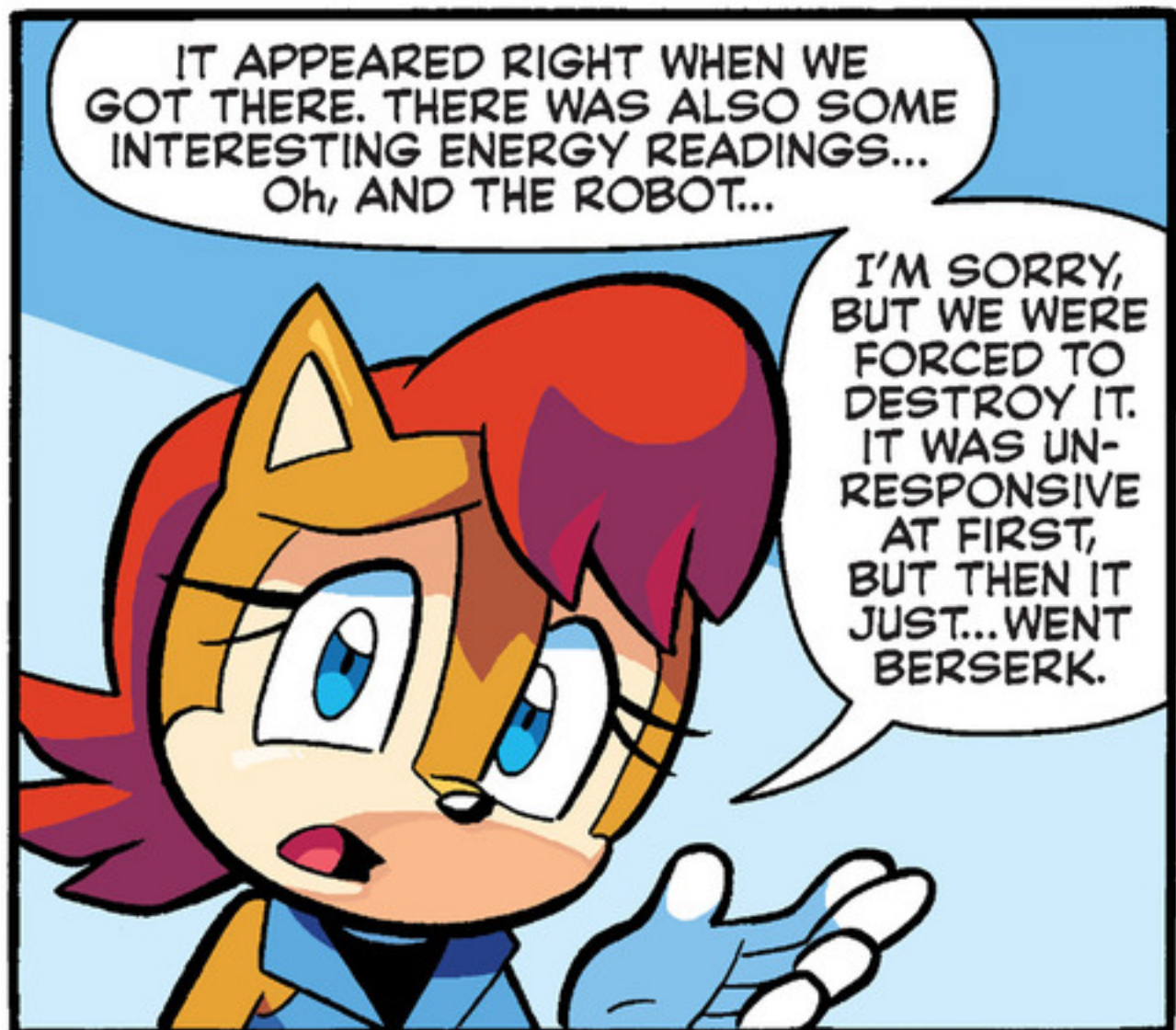
IT'S
ANOTHER
RED STAR
RING!







YOU'RE BACK!
HOW--OH! A
SECOND RED
STAR RING!



IT APPEARED RIGHT WHEN WE
GOT THERE. THERE WAS ALSO SOME
INTERESTING ENERGY READINGS...
OH, AND THE ROBOT...

I'M SORRY,
BUT WE WERE
FORCED TO
DESTROY IT.
IT WAS UN-
RESPONSIVE
AT FIRST,
BUT THEN IT
JUST...WENT
BERSERK.



THAT'S NOT EXACTLY REASSURING.
I DUNNO IF WE'RE EVEN ALL THAT
MUCH CLOSER TO PINPOINTING
THE PROBLEM HERE AND...

YAAAWN



THIS **HAS** BEEN
A LONG DAY.

YOU SHOULD
GET SOME
REST.

BUT THE
ROBOTS...

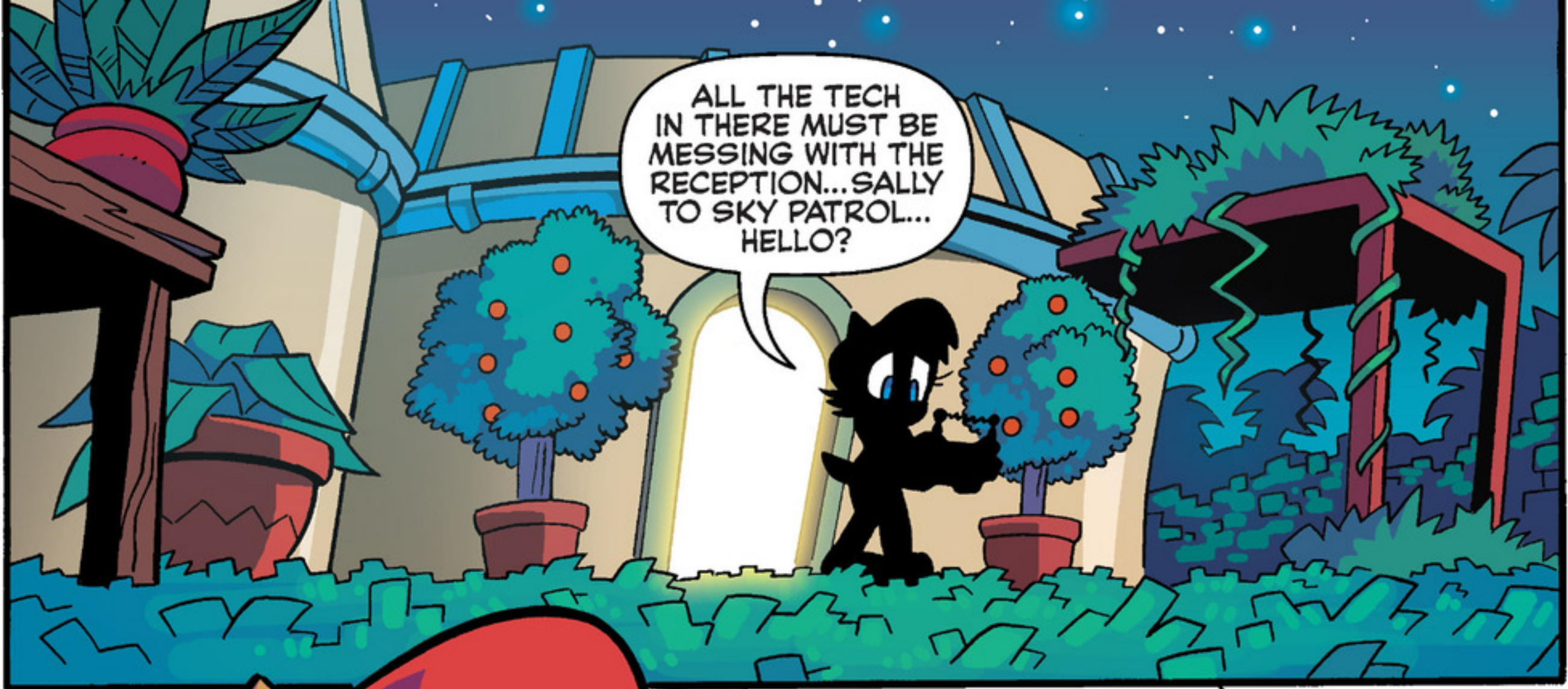
I'LL KEEP
TABS ON THINGS.
IF ANYTHING GOES
DISASTROUSLY
WRONG, TRUST ME,
I'LL LET YOU
KNOW.



ALL RIGHT,
NICOLE. I'M JUST
GONNA GIVE ROTOR
A QUICK CALL TO
CHECK IN ON THE
SKY PATROL.



THIS WAY, GENTLEMEN. THEY
MAY NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT
THE CHAIRS ARE QUITE COMFY.
SORRY...NEVER NEEDED A
GUEST ROOM HERE.



ALL THE TECH
IN THERE MUST BE
MESSING WITH THE
RECEPTION... SALLY
TO SKY PATROL...
HELLO?



HEY, ROTOR! YEAH, JUST
CALLING TO LET YOU KNOW...
Uh-huh...

YEAH,
DR. ELLIDY'S
OKAY. NICOLE
REACHED HIM IN
TIME AND... YEAH.
HONESTLY, HE
SEEMS A LITTLE
UNEASY AROUND
HER.



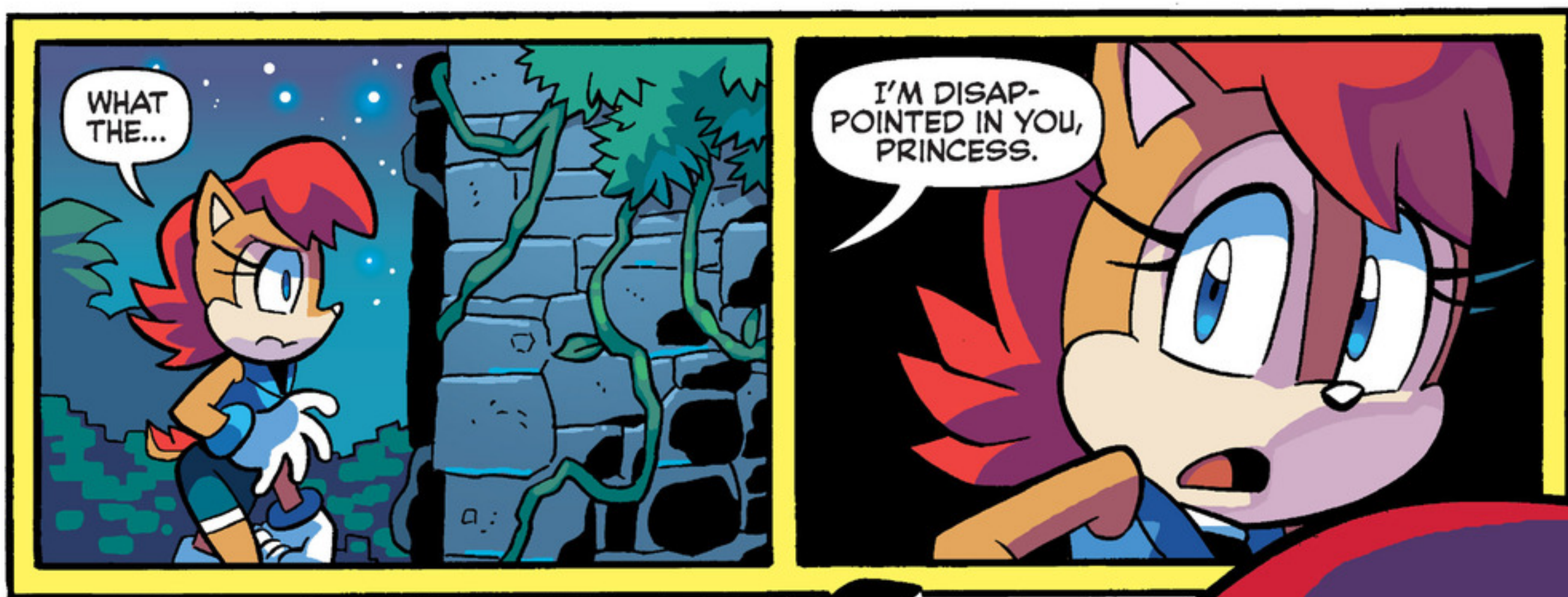
YEAH, I KNOW IT'S BEEN
A LONG TIME. LISTEN,
THERE'S SOME KIND OF
PROBLEM HERE... NOT
SURE... MIGHT BE A
VIRUS, OR MAYBE
EVEN A HACKER...



YEAH, I KNOW.
TV ALWAYS GETS
"HACKING" WRONG.
DON'T... Oh,
THAT MIGHT BE THE
OTHERS CALLING?
ALL RIGHT. 'NIGHT,
ROTOR. SEE YOU
TOMORROW.



Huh.



LOOKS
LIKE SALLY
STUMBLED
ACROSS SOMETHING
SHE WASN'T MEANT TO SEE!

WILL THE **FREEDOM FIGHTERS**
SURVIVE THE NIGHT?!

FIND OUT IN: **SPARK OF LIFE** PART THREE

AND DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT
SONIC THE HEDGEHOG EACH MONTH, the SONIC
SUPER SPECIALS & SONIC SUPER DIGESTS EACH
QUARTER, & THE GRAPHIC NOVEL LIBRARY ANY TIME!
PLUS THE ALL-NEW SERIES SONIC BOOM--ON SALE NOW!!

NEXT ISSUE: SONIC UNIVERSE 73



ASSESSING THREATS...

RECOMMENDED ACTION...

...TERMINATION

SPARK
OF LIFE

PART 3 OF 4